(c) Motor Spirit and High Speed Diesel (Regulation of Supply, Distribution and Prevention of Malpractices) Order, 2005 and Kerosene (Restriction on Use and Fixation of Ceiling Price) Order, 1993 were accordingly amended for making provision regarding introduction of marker system in Kerosene to check adulteration. The Notifications containing these amendments were duly vetted by Ministry of Law and Justice before these were given effect by way of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Assistance for oil exploration

3804. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATU RAL GAS be pleased to state:

whether compared to privately owned oil fields, the production from the fields of state owned oil companies like ONGC and Oil India limited have been declining, with-in-house efforts to enhance production not yielding any results;

if so, whether Government is considering to involve private players including foreign majors to develop these state owned fields towards increase in yields; and

what will be the projected quantum of yield from 162 blocks under exploration since 1999 under the NELP scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Most of the producing fields of national oil companies are old and have crossed their plateau period of production and entered the natural decline phase (a natural process in the production life of oil fields). It is pertinent to mention that the increase in production comes through either additional development in the existing fields or development of new fields, which can offset the decline from the old fields.

Oil companies are implementing proven new technologies under Improved Oil Recovery (IOR)/Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR) projects such as various well techniques like drilling on horizontal and multilateral wells by side-tract in old wells, work over, hydro-fracturing acidisation etc. to augment oil production.

The estimated oil and gas production from the New Exploration Licencing Policy (NELP) Blocks as per approved Field Development Plan in the terminal year of XI Plan (2011-12) may be of the order of 30.28 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) (Oil & Oil equivalent gas).

Crude refining capacity in the country

3805. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATU RAL GAS be pleased to state:

whether India still needs to enhance its crude refining capacity both in public and private sector to cater to the increasing demands for petro products in the country;

whether the proposal to strip new refinery projects of income tax benefits would put further investments in new oil refinery projects in jeopardy; and

whether petroleum crude falls under the definition of mineral oil, the refining of which will be subjected to the deprival of Income Tax benefits under the current budget proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) The refinery sector was delicensed in June, 1998.